The Sketch

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FUTURE QUEEN OF YUGOSLAVIA.

H.R.H. PRINCESS ALEXANDRA OF GREECE, *daughter of the late King Alexander of Greece and of the Princess Aspasia, has been engaged to H.M. King Peter of Yugoslavia for nearly a year, but the formal announcement has only just been made; and, owing to the sufferings of the peoples of Yugoslavia and Greece, the betrothal ceremony will not take place at present. Princess Alexandra, a great-great-granddaughter of Queen Victoria, is twenty-two. She trained as a Red Cross nurse at Cambridge.*

CAMERA PORTRAIT BY BERTRAM PARK.

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

Methinks already, from this Chymick flame,
I see a city of more precious mold :
Rich as the town which gives the Indies name,
With Silver pav'd, and all divine with Gold.

Already labouring with a mighty fate,
She shakes the Rubbish from her mounting Brow,
And seems to have renew'd her Charters date,
Which Heav'n will to the death of time allow.

More great than human now, and more August,
New deified she from her Fires does rise :
Her widening Streets on new Foundations trust,
And, opening, into larger parts she flies.

New London. This, and much more in the same strain, was written of London by John Dryden in 1667, when the City had purged plague with fire, thereby disinfecting herself more drastically than she had intended. If the New London which arose was not exactly paved with silver and gold—more practicable substances were found—it was at least an improvement on the old, though, to our thinking, still somewhat primitive. I don't like that bit about flying into larger parts—sounds like another blitz !

And New Jerusalem. The flame which devoured the City in 1940 was " Chymick " in a sense that Dryden never knew, but it was certainly thorough. Once again London has to " shake the Rubbish from her mounting Brow," and there is quite a lot of rubbish to shake, and the brow is mounting very high. If I were to profess that I had studied every detail of the London County Plan (200 pages, 60 illustrations, maps and diagrams in profusion), I should be trifling with the truth. But I have seen enough of it to realise that the New Jerusalem is upon us, even if it cannot run to the silver and gold. (But why not ? Would not that be an excellent use to make of all the " frozen " gold stored in Kentucky ?)

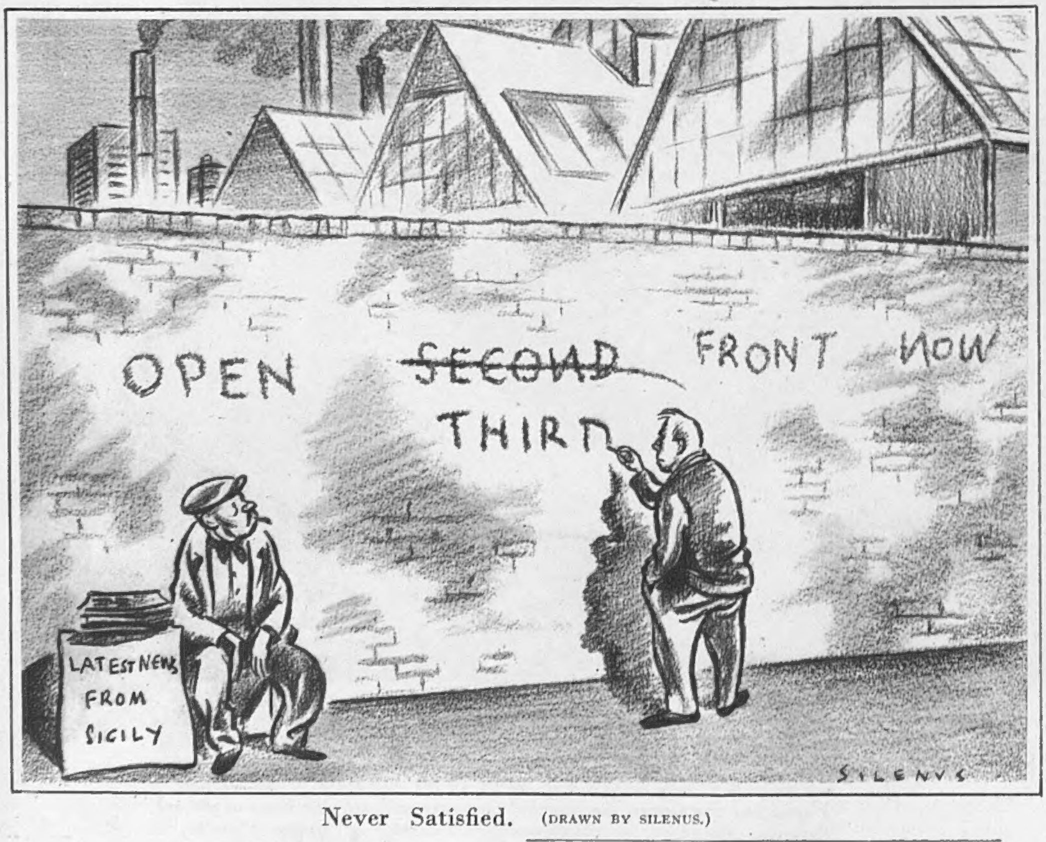
Machine-Made. It is all very splendid (if costly), and, of course, no reasonable person can view with anything but approval slum clearance, improvement of communication, Green Belts and Green Rings, decentralisation of factories, and many such obviously sensible things. But I cannot help hoping that London is not going to become just an enormous blueprint. Part of its charm to me is its unexpectedness and its — what shall I call it ? — its irrationality. So typically British, don't you know ! In my experience, the least interesting and the least beautiful cities in the world are those which look as if they were exhibited in a glass case or pinned to a drawing-board. I also hope that Londoners will be allowed a little scope with regard to the place and the way they live, and will not all become marionettes popping in and out of pre-fabricated dolls'-houses. Nor that their manner of life will be entirely regulated by a vast army of officials operating a gigantic switchboard. However, I am not really afraid. London is the most individual place in the world, and even in the character of Phœnix I think it will retain its individuality. What I should most like to do with it is to reduce its size by half, but I fear that may not be easy.

" Will you please hurry, Parkinson ! I want to use that gun."

DRAWN BY PITTS.

The Press-Gang. Some of the builders of New London are likely to be women ; they ought to have ideas about architecture and design, and as we are likely to have a shortage of at least half-a-million builders after the war, we shall have to call on the girls for that job, too. Considering the number of things they are doing already—I see that they are even being trained as rat-catchers nowadays !—I see no reason why a pretty girl should not lay a pretty brick. There are, in fact, so many things for women to do that there are not enough able-bodied young women (so it is said) to do them ; and so Mr. Bevin is going to call up the women between forty-five and fifty, and they are all going to be placed at the mercy of " duration " Jacks-in-office at local branches of the Ministry of Labour. The next thing, no doubt, will be a Grandmothers' Brigade to add to the national effort.

Limpets and Blimpets. This is as arrant a piece of nonsense as has yet been committed in this war, and I am glad to see that there are still a few people in the House of Commons who are prepared to kick against it and to insist that, before the backs of middle-aged camels are quite broken,



Never Satisfied. (DRAWN BY SILENUS.)

A WEEK'S DAILY PAPERS WILL MAKE THE INTERIOR COMPONENT OF A MINE. HAND YOURS IN.

there should be a thorough survey to see how many of the younger camels are carrying full loads. I know hardly one middle-aged woman outside the Services—and, of course, this applies specially to the matrons and housewives—who is not working

" Didn't you adore that bit in the Second Movement where the strings and fourth horn have a dialogue of strangely wistful significance ? "

DRAWN BY '692.

to capacity, not to say exhaustion. But because they are not all wearing uniforms or badges, nor qualifying for medals (richly though they deserve them), they are not supposed to be " contributing to the war effort." This is the kind of class-conscious claptrap which I read about them. " In the official view they are just living parasitically on the national pool, drawing out as much as they can, and contributing nothing. Working-class and middle-class women who have working husbands to look after will receive very sympathetic treatment when they go before the interviewing panels." Down with the bourgeoisie ! The same commentator goes on to observe that the " social work " done by these gilded parasites is all a pose and a sham.

Queen Bees. Well, it happens that I have come across a considerable number of young women from at least one Department, and, with very few exceptions, they are bored to screams with their work and are wasting half their time. Many of them have had expensive educations and are doing jobs which (if necessary at all) could be far better done by turning the handle of a machine. It is not their fault ; they are only too anxious to pull their weight and find jobs worth doing, but they are not allowed to transfer, because they are " indispensable." I venture to believe that this is going on all over the country, and that there is an appalling waste of the energy and keenness of youth. Meanwhile, the not-so-youngs, who are fighting every minute to keep the home front together, not to mention all the anxieties of the family and all the fatigues of voluntary service in " spare " time (comic term)—these are " parasites " and Queen Bees. After this war, I hope to see a special service decoration awarded for just Being a Parasite !

Male Maternity. None of these Futile Females, of course, know their own jobs half as well as the Civil Service knows them. I observe that they are even ignorant of what was supposed to be their speciality, mothercraft ; and, simultaneously with a debate in the House of Lords on Telegenesis and other little modern improvements like that, it is proposed by some bright minds to set up a Ministry of Reproduction. Naturally, there will not be any of these parasitical women in it, but it will be run (yes, these are the very words !) " by men who have devoted their lives to the scientific study of motherhood." Any women who apply for jobs on the staff will, I need hardly say, be referred to the department for the scientific study of fatherhood. And I dare say they would not be such bad judges either.

Homo Sapiens. It is quite simple : all you need for tasks of this kind is a little Psychology. You can do anything at all by psychology nowadays. I understand that soldierly qualities and efficiency are now determined by " aptitude tests," which must be great fun for the psychologists. As I have never seen them at work, I suppose I am not entitled to an opinion about them, but there was a time when I flattered myself (not without some reason) that I could pick out a good soldier by using my observation and common sense—or, better still, by living in the same trench with him for a week. I cannot help wondering how (say) Marlborough, Wellington, or Alexander the Great would have made out in the aptitude tests. However, some of the Mind Masters are so much encouraged by their successes that they want to carry things much further, and I am told that at a recent conference it was urged that everybody's vocation in life should be fixed at an early age by just applying a few tests out of the book. The next stage, I presume, is to put every baby through a machine, see what the gauge registers—and there you have your citizen, all nicely docketed and fitted out for life. It seems incredible, but that is really the way that some people are thinking in our enlightened age.

Stranger than Fiction. The difficulty is that both things and people *will* not behave according to plan. If, after all the utterly incredible adventures of this war, you still doubt that truth is stranger than fiction, listen to this : " The respondent's case was that he was the husband of the petitioner and that in 1909, while unconscious during illness, he was taken for dead and carried to the cremation ground, and that after he had been placed by the funeral pyre there was a heavy rainstorm which drove his attendants to shelter, that he recovered

[*Continued overleaf.*

" I wonder, my dear, if you could dance a hornpipe for the children ? "

DRAWN BY BRETTELL.

Continued.]
consciousness and was taken away by sanyasis (mendicants), with whom, having lost his memory, he lived, wandering from district to district until eventually, about 1921, he recovered his memory and subsequently instituted the present proceedings." Show me the dramatist or novelist who would dare to use a plot like that! If you want to "see life," you should undoubtedly go to the law-courts, and you can get the entertainment free, gratis and for nothing—unless you happen to be one of the litigants!

"You appear to be using your car for pleasure purposes . . ."
DRAWN BY WELLAND.

Food Flashes. But let me turn from these *trivia* to something really important—something, in short, that you can eat. Also, second only in importance, something that you can drink. You will get your nice cupper tea all right next year, whatever happens to Hitler; the Government has bought seven hundred million pounds of it to cheer but not inebriate you. Seven hundred million pounds! I should think it would be about the size of one of the Pyramids. That is what I call the sinews of war—but I simply hate to imagine what Goebbels, quaffing his acorn-and-sawdust coffee, must think of such a self-indulgent, tea-sodden race. Another little bonanza—you will have one pound of onions all to yourself. In fact, you can have two, because you can have my pound, as I am allergic to this repulsive vegetable. If you dig for victory, you can have another pound or two; and then I hope you will have the decency to go into quarantine.

Scotland's Shame. Do you crave wine? You can get a nice drop or two at a Red Cross sale at about £1 per drop. I see that somebody paid 750*s.* for a dozen Château Lafitte, 1934. Well, I did rather better than that, because, by remarkable foresight and before there was any question of patriotism, I got some for 60*s.*, and château-bottled at that. Any offers? I wish I had got some olive oil, too, and I heartily endorse a housewife's pathetic plea in *The Times* for shipping-space for this essential commodity—at whatever cost to amphibious operations. I *can*, however, do without this "mystery cider" which is said to be going about. Yes, I can do without that, but I cannot do without porridge, and I am shocked to the marrow when I find Mr. James Maxton saying, "I think porridge is just one of the greatest swindles that was ever worked on an innocent and unsuspecting people." Mr. Maxton evidently suffered in youth from lumps in the porridge, and he has my deepest sympathy; but I do not think he will be able to show his face again in Glasgow after uttering this outrageous sentiment.

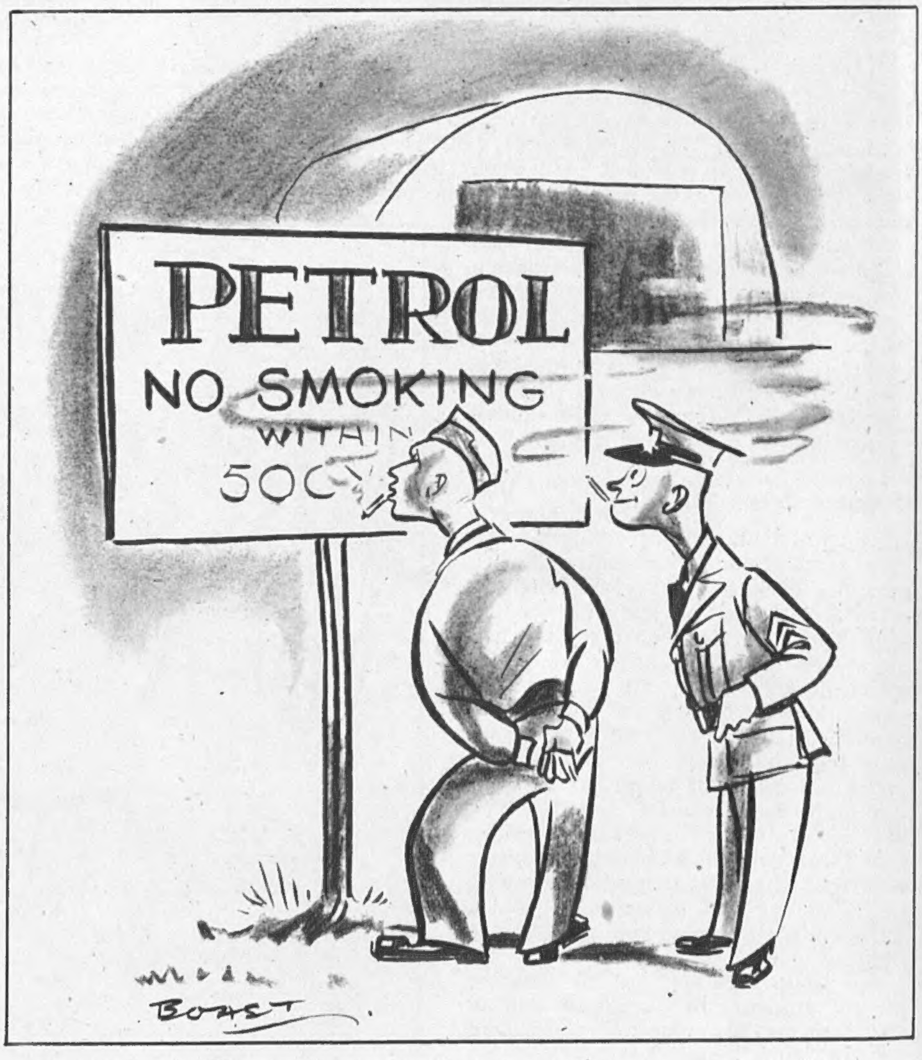
Lucky Alf!

"Don't you know there's a war on?" they said unto him. "No," replied Mr. Alfred Arthur—and it was true. He had gone a-roving in the Australian bush in 1939, and all he had heard of news from the Front was a rumour that "England was at war with Poland." Lucky Alf! Let's all go off into the mulga-mulga!

Ho No!

Unexpectedly enough, the Spanish newspaper *Ya* says that "the British Empire constitutes the hope as well as the guarantee that neither disorder nor barbarism nor tyranny shall master the world." Did I hear the Herr Doktor remark, "Oh Ya?"

"Gosh, Sir—you startled me! Just for a moment I thought you were Clark Gable!" (DRAWN BY STARKE.)



"Say! They couldn't be more fussy if it was gasoline!"
DRAWN BY BOAST.

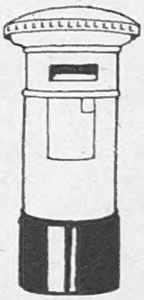
The seventieth of our SERIES OF PLATES IN FULL COLOUR *published in this issue of "The Sketch" is by* DAVID WRIGHT.

"VELLY SOLLY, MON AMI, FULLUPSKI!"

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.

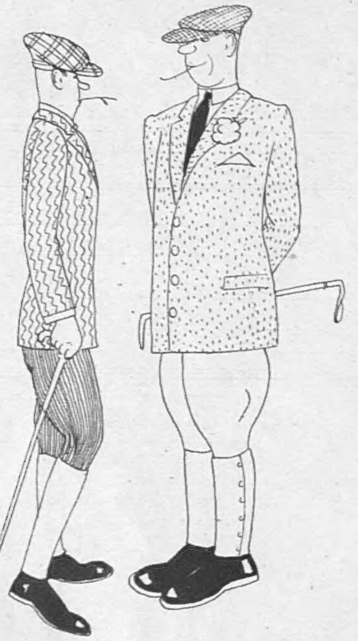
Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT—We had a Horse Show in a village near here on August Bank Holiday. Faith, who looks as lovely on a horse as off one, had been invited to ride somebody's hunter, so, of course, the Conductor wanted to go and see her do it, and he and Lady B. and Mrs. Savernack and Charles and I walked over. It was a long time since any of us had had a country walk, and we all enjoyed it, though our poor feet began to feel the strain before we got there.

The Show was in a field near the river, and there was an enormous crowd round the ring and a few thousand bicycles stacked in the hedges. The air smelt of hot grass and horses and leather, and, there were a lot of people in leggings and check caps, with bits of grass in their mouths. Outside the crowd were the riders, white with excitement, ready mounted, waiting their turn, and under the trees were the patient farm horses, decked out in ribbons and jingling brass. Time slipped backwards with a click, and we were away in the careless and happy days of Peace. Just once an aeroplane passed overhead, and I looked up and said to myself, "What a target for a tip-and-run raider," but quickly dismissed the thought from my mind. This rural scene of innocence and charm was not to be marred by thoughts of Hitler.



"People in leggings and check caps."

Charles and Mrs. Savernack, who belong to the Horsy World, had tickets which entitled them to sit in deck-chairs, among the High-ups, with the sun behind them, but though the Conductor and Lady B. and I begged them to avail themselves of this grandeur, they insisted upon staying with us among the Ordinary People.

When we arrived there were a lot of children riding their ponies round and round the ring. Nearly all of them were little girls, sitting easily in their saddles, with their pig-tails flying in the wind. Though outwardly calm in demeanour, it was obvious that they were excited beyond words and would probably be sick in the night.

"Male sex *not* well represented," said Charles, shaking his head as one little golden-haired boy rode by.

Mrs. Savernack snorted. "Aeroplanes!" she said bitterly.

Then there was a roar from the crowd as a gypsy girl entered the ring on one of the smallest Shetland ponies ever shown. In a cotton frock and a sad absence of knicker, she kept her long, thin legs off the ground with difficulty, and managed to get thrown in front of the Deck-Chairs.

"I hope she gets a special prize," said the Conductor in a choked voice. He is always moved by the sight of gallant and unself-conscious youth.

"That 's the pony I like best—that pale one," I said.

"I suppose you mean the dun," said Mrs. Savernack.

"Henrietta chooses horses because they have kind faces," said Charles.

"That 's how I choose people," said the Conductor.

At the end, the gypsy child—who, to our grief, had not been awarded the prize—put her feet to the ground and the pony walked away from under her.

"We got terribly tired walking home."

After that it was the jumping, which was much the same as it always is in a Horse Show: the horses showing an intense reluctance to jump at all, and rather more determination than usual about refusing at the brick wall. The people in the crowd, who knew nothing whatever about it, gave a lot of advice and shouted "Whoops!" at every jump, which made the horses even more disinclined to jump than they had been before. One lady, dressed as for Ascot—in a black silk frock and long ear-rings—gave so much incorrect information in a loud voice that Charles became fascinated, and turned his back on the ring in order not to miss a word.

"It 's hard to believe," he said in an awed whisper, "that *anybody* could know so little about anything and say so much."

"You find the same things at concerts," said the Conductor. "It 's the chap whose favourite tune is 'In a Monastery Garden' who shoots his mouth about a Beethoven concerto."

"And at the Academy," said Lady B., "the little man creeping round without a catalogue is the one who knows all about it."

The Ascot Lady edged a little nearer and gave us a Look. "I can't think why people who are not interested in Horses come to Horse Shows," she said. She then proclaimed that the horse which had—wisely, I thought—refused the five-barred gate hadn't had a chance, because the rider had been pulling at the snaffle.

Then it was Faith, and we pushed the Conductor to the front so that he would get a better view. She entered the ring looking superb on a beautiful mount.

"Doesn't she look lovely?" said the Conductor. There were tears in his eyes, and Lady B. squeezed his hand.

"I like those light-brown horses. Don't you?" I said.

"Bay," said Mrs. Savernack.

"Bey? Oh, yes, bay, of course."

Faith trotted with the others round the ring in a demure procession. As she passed our corner, she gave us a dazzling smile, and there was a burst of applause from the crowd.

"Her hands are all wrong," said the Ascot Lady, and the Conductor turned and glared at her through his spectacles.

"Keep your chin in, Faith, darling," said Charles in a low voice.

Faith kept her chin in, and a little smile at the corners of her mouth. When they began to canter, her light-brown horse—whose name, by the way, was Alexander, and who was obviously enjoying every minute of his appearance in the ring—neighed loudly and began going sideways, like a crab.

"A gypsy girl entered the ring."

"She 'll fall off!" cried the Conductor.

"Nonsense!" said Charles.

In the end, Faith and Alexander won the first prize, and Faith cantered away with a card and a blue rosette between her teeth.

"Who said her hands were wrong?" said the Conductor, turning round, but the Ascot Lady had disappeared.

We hardly had time to slap the Conductor on the back, when the ring was filled with driving vehicles, from governess-carts, with ecstatic children bumping up and down inside them, to a four-wheeled dog-cart, with yellow wheels and a Groom and Lady sitting side by side, very stiff and dignified. There was a roar from the crowd when a tiny trotting buggy came into sight. Squeezed into it was an enormously fat man who bulged over the sides. With a bowler-hat on one side and a large cigar in the corner of his mouth, he went spanking round the ring. Here was another professional, and a foreigner, but he made us laugh, so we forgave him. "A proper ole cuckoo in the nest, for zure," I heard somebody say.

The dun that I had picked out got a medal for being the best pony in the Show, so you see, Robert, there is something in a kind face, after all.

We got terribly tired walking home.

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.

"LIKE MOST THINGS, BERT, IT'S EASY ENOUGH WHEN YOU'VE GOT TO DO IT."

DRAWN BY KENNETH BEAUCHAMP.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

SOMETHING a little different from the usual war-film has turned up in "FLEMISH FARM" (Leicester Square). It belongs to the semi-documentary school; that is to say, it tells a fictitious story, based on a real-life episode. The film begins in the summer of 1940, just before the Belgian capitulation. The last remnants of the last squadron of the Belgian Air Force are quartered at a Flemish farm—an emergency landing-ground in use in their retreat to the coast. When the news of the surrender comes through, the Commanding Officer (Clive Brock) gives orders that the regimental colours must not fall into enemy hands. A bundle is made, an orderly swims out to sea, and at dawn the flag is buried off the coast with full military honours.

A few months later, two of the Belgian pilots, Duclos (Clifford Evans) and Matagne (Philip Friend), who have escaped to England in the four remaining 'planes, meet in the R.A.F. Matagne tells Duclos a curious tale. The burial at sea, he says, was a mock ceremony, planned to deceive the Germans. At precisely the same moment he, on the C.O.'s instructions, was burying the real flag in a field beside the Flemish farm. Matagne hopes to go back to Belgium to reclaim the flag. Before he can put his plan into operation, he is killed in the Battle of Britain.

So, naturally, it is Duclos who goes. He is handicapped, apart from any other tricky little detail of wartime travel, by the fact that only Matagne and his Belgian wife (Jane Baxter) know the precise spot where the flag is buried. In rough workman's clothes, carrying a small attaché-case with his toothbrush and pyjamas, plus a handy towel to wrap up the flag, he sets off by parachute to Belgium to contact Mme. Matagne. It is, of course, a help to find that his old Commanding Officer is now a respected citizen of Brussels, secretly working for the Allies. How Duclos finds Mme. Matagne, how they dig up the flag by night under the noses of the German soldiery, how he travels 600 miles to some frontier, with the precious silk wound round his neck as a scarf or rolled up in his bath-towel, makes up the main part of the story. "Flemish Farm" is a series of episodes, rather than a cumulative drama. It ambles along, in the leisurely, rural style of the English picaresque. There are exciting moments, but the prevailing mood is quiet—there is remarkably little hate in the picture, and a blessed absence of heroics. It is a pleasing film, rather than a great film.

DIXIE (Plaza), with Bing Crosby, has it all there in the title—the old South, the old songs, and the old nostalgic sentiment. To match the prevailing mood, it is photographed in the tenderer shades of Technicolor, quite a relief after some of the strident efforts we have seen lately. "Dixie" is the story of—or, at least, it is *a* story about—America's first nigger minstrel, Dan Emmett, the man who wrote "I wish I was in Dixie," and saw it become the rallying song of the Confederacy. Nothing so disturbing as a Civil War, though, ruffles the film's placid surface. The story confines itself to the early days of Emmett's career, with what exactitude, I leave to the historians. Young Dan (the Crosby rôle, naturally) leaves home, with 500 dollars in his pocket, to make a name for himself as a composer and actor. Nobody ever having told him not to play cards with strangers on paddle-steamers, he loses every cent to a persuasive gentleman named Mr. Bones (Billy de Wolfe). Mr. Bones, though, has a heart under his green and lavender velvet. Or maybe he just has a showman's flair. At any rate, he introduces the impoverished Dan to his own theatrical boarding-house (elegantly swept each morning by Miss Dorothy Lamour), and, with Dan and two other boarders, forms a minstrel quartet—the first group in America to perform publicly in blackface.

The composer, however, does not marry Miss Lamour, in spite of one or two tender encounters. He marries a cripple girl from home (Marjorie Reynolds), his boyhood sweetheart. This makes for a certain sense of strain when Mrs. Emmett, in her wheel-chair, joins the boarding-house group, but all is happily resolved by a theatre fire. It is only a little fire, confined to a single dressing-room and quickly under control. No one dies in it. No one has to be rescued from it. No one is even remotely in danger from it. But not only does the fire destroy the touching little note of renunciation written to Emmett by his wife, but it proves to be the *fons et origo* of his professional success. Let me quote my synopsis for the simple facts: "Dan introduces a new song, 'Dixie,' and as he sings it a fire breaks out in the theatre, and the increased tempo at which he is obliged to sing it in consequence reveals the true spirit of the song and causes it to become a rousing martial air."

The fire scene is the high-light of the film, and it is a real tribute to Bing Crosby's talent that he manages to make something rather touching and effective out of what is, after all, a fairly trifling dramatic motive.

I may be old-fashioned, but the theme of a nice young girl hotly pursuing a man who doesn't want to marry her has never seemed to me the happiest of dramatic motives. That is one reason why I rate "HERS TO HOLD" (Tivoli and New Gallery) considerably lower than the best Deanna Durbin pictures. The whole film is an account of the wooing of airman Bill Morley (Joseph Cotten) by poor-little-rich-girl Penny Craig (Deanna Durbin). Bill meets Penny at a clinic which they are both attending as blood donors. He kisses her, gets her address and telephone number, and crashes her parents' fashionable, but oddly ill-mannered, party. He flirts with Penny, he likes Penny, but he doesn't want to marry Penny. As he admits quite frankly to a friend (Gus Schilling): "You spend an evening with Miss Craig, and she gets that look in her eye—you know, that for ever and ever look. As soon as my papers come, I 'm gone."

Penny, however, wants Bill for keeps, and she goes to work to get Bill. She goes literally to work, signing on as an assembly hand at the Vega Aircraft Factory, where Bill is putting in a little light construction work while waiting for his commission. Not only does she bore holes in steel plates for his sake, but she sings to the workers at lunch-hour concerts. Naturally, with that voice, and those tailored overalls with the knife-edge pleats, she rapidly becomes the Sweetheart of the Plant.

Bill, however, is a tough proposition. Although impressed—as who wouldn't be?—by Penny's rendering of "Begin the Beguine," and deeply moved by a teary little number entitled "Say a Prayer for the Boys Over There," he determines to remain single. He gets as far as the flying field, with his airplane racing to go, before Penny eventually

THE BEST THEATRES.

*Starred by "The Sketch." ***=highest value.*

**Adelphi: "THE DANCING YEARS." Ivor Novello in his romantic musical play, with Muriel Barron and Roma Beaumont.

***Aldwych: "WATCH ON THE RHINE." Roger Livesey, Ursula Jeans, Zena Dare. Anti-Nazis in the U.S.A.

**Ambassadors: "SWEET AND LOW." Hermione Gingold and Walter Crisham in revue.

***Apollo: "FLARE PATH." R.A.F. "ops." Adrianne Allen.

**Cambridge: "HEARTBREAK HOUSE." Revival—Robert Donat Edith Evans, Isabel Jeans, Deborah Kerr.

*Coliseum: "IT'S FOOLISH, BUT IT'S FUN." Revue with Nervo and Knox.

***Duchess: "BLITHE SPIRIT." Noel Coward's play. Joyce Carey, Judy Campbell. Original cast returns August 31.

*Garrick: "LIVING ROOM." Esther McCracken's third. Louise Hampton and Jane Baxter.

*Globe: "THEY CAME TO A CITY." New Priestley play with John Clements, Googie Withers, Ada Reeve.

*Haymarket: "LOVE FOR LOVE." Congreve comedy with John Gielgud, Yvonne Arnaud, Leslie Banks, Angela Baddeley, Leon Quartermaine.

**Hippodrome: "THE LISBON STORY." Play with music.

**Palace: "HI-DE-HI." Hilarious revue, with Flanagan and Allen, Florence Desmond, Eddie Gray.

*Piccadilly: "SUNNY RIVER." Musical play with Edith Day, Evelyn Laye, Dennis Noble.

**Prince of Wales: "STRIKE A NEW NOTE." George Black's revue, with the rising generation and Sid Field.

*Princes: "MAGIC CARPET." Musical extravaganza; with Sydney Howard and Cyril Fletcher.

**St. James's: "A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY." Turgenev comedy perfectly done; Michael Redgrave, Nora Swinburne, Ronald Squire.

**St. Martin's: "CLAUDIA." Joyce Redman and Hugh Sinclair on an American farm.

**Saville: "JUNIOR MISS." Comedy with the accent on youth. Joan White, Peggy Cummins.

**Strand: "ARSENIC AND OLD LACE." Witty, murderous farce. Lilian Braithwaite, Mary Jerrold, Naunton Wayne, Frank Pettingell, Edmund Willard.

**Vaudeville: "LOTTIE DUNDASS." Unusual thriller with Ann Todd and Sybil Thorndike.

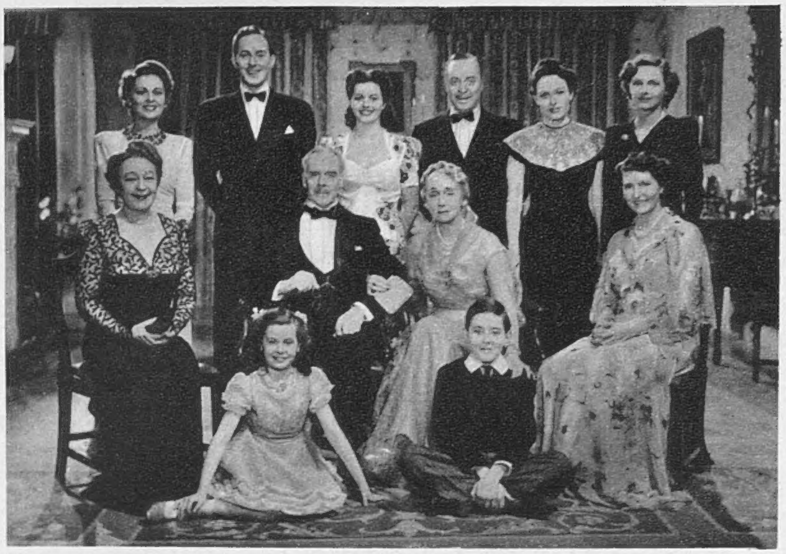
*Westminster: "MR. BOLFRY." New James Bridie play. Alastair Sim.

*Whitehall: "THE MOON IS DOWN." John Steinbeck's book dramatised. Lewis Casson, Karel Stepanek, Carla Lehmann.

**Winter Garden: "IT 'S TIME TO DANCE." Musical with Jack Buchanan, Fred Emney, Elsie Randolph.

*Wyndham's: "QUIET WEEK-END." Sequel to "Quiet Wedding."

N.B.—While we shall always do our best to keep this list up to date, we cannot hold ourselves responsible for any errors which may occur. Consult your daily paper; ring up the theatre to avoid disappointment.



" Dear Octopus " (Gaumont, Haymarket, and Marble Arch Pavilion), the Gainsborough screening of Dodie Smith's comedy, is played by (back row), Edna (Nora Swinburne) ; *Nicholas* (Michael Wilding) ; *Penny* (Margaret Lockwood) ; *Kenneth* (Basil Radford) ; *Hilda* (Antoinette Cellier) ; *Cynthia* (Celia Johnson). *Seated : Belle* (Athene Seyler) ; *Charles* (Frederick Leister) ; *Dora* (Helen Haye) ; *and Marjorie* (Madge Compton). *Foreground : Scrap* (Ann Stephens) ; *and Bill* (Derek Lansiaux).

catches up with him. This time she proposes to him, fortified by a rendering of "Pale Hands I Loved Beside the Shalimar," and he accepts the inevitable.

The pleasantest bits of the film, I thought, had nothing to do with the man-hunt, but simply showed us Penny in her family life. Charles Winninger, who has played Deanna Durbin's father in so many of her films, takes over his old rôle here, and a neat device of a home cinematograph gives us scenes from the early Durbin pictures, as souvenirs of Penny's childhood. We see Deanna at fourteen, diving from the canoe in " Three Smart Girls " ; Deanna cycling in " Mad About Music " ; Deanna in her first ball-frock in " Three Smart Girls Grow Up." It is all very charming, and Mr. Winninger, in everything he does, is a great help to the picture. Joseph Cotten is personable and a help, too, as the flying Lothario. But I couldn't help feeling that a little less yearning and a little better story would have been a greater help.

" Mr. Lucky " (London Pavilion) stars Laraine Day, *as pretty socialite Dorothy Bryant and* Cary Grant *as Joe the Greek, gambler and chief shareholder in the big gambling ship " Fortuna." Joe, impersonating a dead man to avoid his call-up, offers to raise funds for War Relief Inc., by running a roulette table on the ship. Mrs. Steadman* (Gladys Cooper) *and other officials fall for the idea, but Dorothy Bryant* (Laraine Day) *suspects a double-cross on the part of Joe and his partner Zepp.*

" Bataan " (Empire), starring Robert Taylor (George Murphy, *left : a Filipino, centre), is M.-G.-M.'s realistic screening of the immortal defence of Bataan by thirteen of General MacArthur's men. Their job to prevent the Japs building a bridge across the river and wiping out the post. Hot jungle atmosphere, Japanese superstition and nerves, excellently worked-out characterisation, make a film whose authenticity is impressive and exciting. Director—Tay Garnett, ace action-expert.*

" Dixie " (Plaza), Paramount Technicolor film, stars Dorothy Lamour *as Millie Cook, housekeeper in a New Orleans theatrical boarding-house ; and Dan Emmett* (Bing Crosby), *actor-composer, with Mr. Bones* (Billy de Wolfe), *players in a minstrel quartette. Most of the songs are by Jimmy Van Heusen and Johnny Burke.*

"BATAAN" (Empire) is an up-to-date version of the old " Lost Patrol " story, and one of the best of its type. Thirteen American soldiers are stranded somewhere in the Bataan jungle, with the job of holding up a Japanese attempt to mend a bridge as long as they can before the Japs get them. They are a mixed lot, from all branches of the Services—just any thirteen men, drawn together under an impromptu command in the rush of retreat, with an overwhelming number of Japs against them. A few of them are old-timers in the islands, one or two are veterans of the last war, but most of them are raw, with a lot to learn in a very short time. With Japanese snipers picking off the over-enthusiastic from behind every bush, with live yellow men playing 'possum as corpses, with the drinking-water foul and maggots in the meat, they learn fast, and manage to delay the Japanese advance for precisely one hour and fifty-four minutes.

All the types are convincing and sharply drawn, but the most important, from the script-writers' point of view, are obviously a young sailor (Robert Walker), whose ship has been sunk in Manila Bay ; a corporal from the Signal Corps (Lloyd Nolan), with a police record and a twenty-year-old grudge ; and an Immortal Sergeant (Robert Taylor), on whom the command devolves. We know these are the most important, because they are, in that order, the last to die. Mr. Taylor, the star of the piece, has the final fade-out all to himself, ringed round with advancing Japs, swinging the guns every way, shouting and firing as the bullets pour into his body. " Bataan " isn't a nice film, by any means. But for all its grimness, it is a holding film. Each part, although necessarily a brief sketch, is vividly brought to life.

There are no false heroics, no fancy speeches, and no mush. The thirteen, possibly because they don't pretend to be angels, always manage to be men.

EFFORT AND ACHIEVEMENT, ROMANCE AND FROM THE

America's No. 1 Golf Girl, MISS PATTY BERG, is here being sworn into the Marine Corps Women's Reserve by CAPTAIN A. J. MURPHY.

May, Lady Limerick left the proceeds from the sale of the contents of Hall Place to rebuild Coventry Cathedral. Christie's nine-day auction raised £19,375 in five days.

Right: MRS. EDWARD ARDIZZONE, wife of the war artist, with SIR KENNETH CLARK at the National Gallery, where many new war pictures are on view.

MISS GREER GARSON and ENSIGN RICHARD NEY on their wedding day. They met in the filming of "Mrs. Miniver," in which Greer played the title-rôle and Richard was her son.

2ND LIEUT. JOHN G. WINANT, JUNR., twenty-one-year-old son of the U.S. Ambassador in London, is in this country with the U.S. A.A.F. He's in his Fortress, after a sortie over enemy territory.

MISS WINIFRED STILWELL, daughter of Lieut.-General and Mrs. Joseph Stilwell, married CAPTAIN W. E. COX, at Carmel, Cal. CHAPLAIN DANIEL TREVITT is the officiating clergyman.

AN AUCTION; A DOZEN NEWS PICTURES ALLIED NATIONS.

GEORGE FORMBY and his wife, BERYL, are going off to entertain troops in Gib., Malta, North Africa, and Sicily. George thinks his topi suits him.

MLLE. EVE CURIE, daughter of the discoverer of radium, with COLONEL G. I. ROSS, at the New York war weapons show. She's joining the Corps des Volontaires Françaises in England.

Left: MORWENNA DONNELLY *(Mrs. T. Collins)* has won the John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize with her poem "Beauty for Ashes."

Right: MRS. EUAN WALLACE is the Hon. Sec. for the new Churchill Club for members of the U.S. or Dominion Forces stationed in London, at Ashburnham House, Little Dean's Yard.

CAPTAIN CHIANG WEI KUO, *youngest son of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, is seen with* LIEUT.-COLONEL JOSEPH STILWELL, JUNR., *son of the U.S. Commander of the China and Burma Theatre of War.*

MADAME CHIANG KAI-SHEK *is taking a close look at the* GENERALISSIMO'S *latest decoration. He is Chief Commander of the Legion of Merit, the highest honour ever conferred by the U.S. on a foreigner.*

In order to save petrol THE QUEEN *drove round Sandringham by governess cart, and* THE KING *and* PRINCESSES *went on bicycles, to inspect the harvest.*

H.M. THE KING *had a talk with some of the very junior workers who had helped with the harvest, and congratulated them on their prowess.*

WHEN the King and Queen recently toured the harvest fields at Sandringham they travelled by unconventional wartime transport as, in order to save petrol, her Majesty drove in a governess-cart with Mr. French, a groom who has been in the service of the Royal Family since the days of Queen Victoria; and the King and the Princesses followed on their push-bikes. The royal party went across the park, from which a fine crop of oats has been harvested. It was grown on the land which was formerly the King's private golf course. They chatted to the Land Girls and the workers who had helped to bring the harvest home. The Queen had a talk with the Land Girl who drives the mechanized straw baler. The splendid harvest at Sandringham is the result of a comprehensive plan, carried out with the help and advice of the Norfolk War Agricultural Committee.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TOPICAL PRESS.

Royal Procession at Sandringham: THE QUEEN *leads in her governess-cart, and* THE KING *and the* PRINCESSES *follow on push-bikes, pedalling across the Park, where a fine crop of oats has been harvested on what was once the Private Golf Course.*

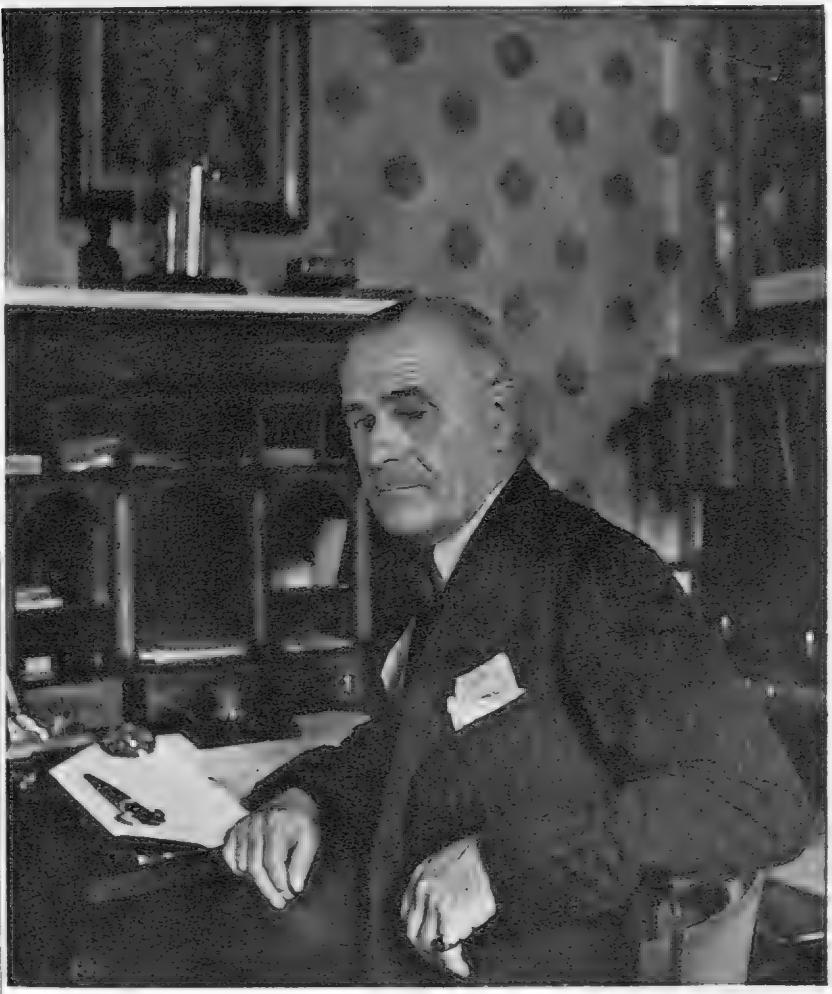
T.R.H. PRINCESS ELIZABETH *and* PRINCESS MARGARET *with one of the fourteen Land Girls who work at Sandringham.*

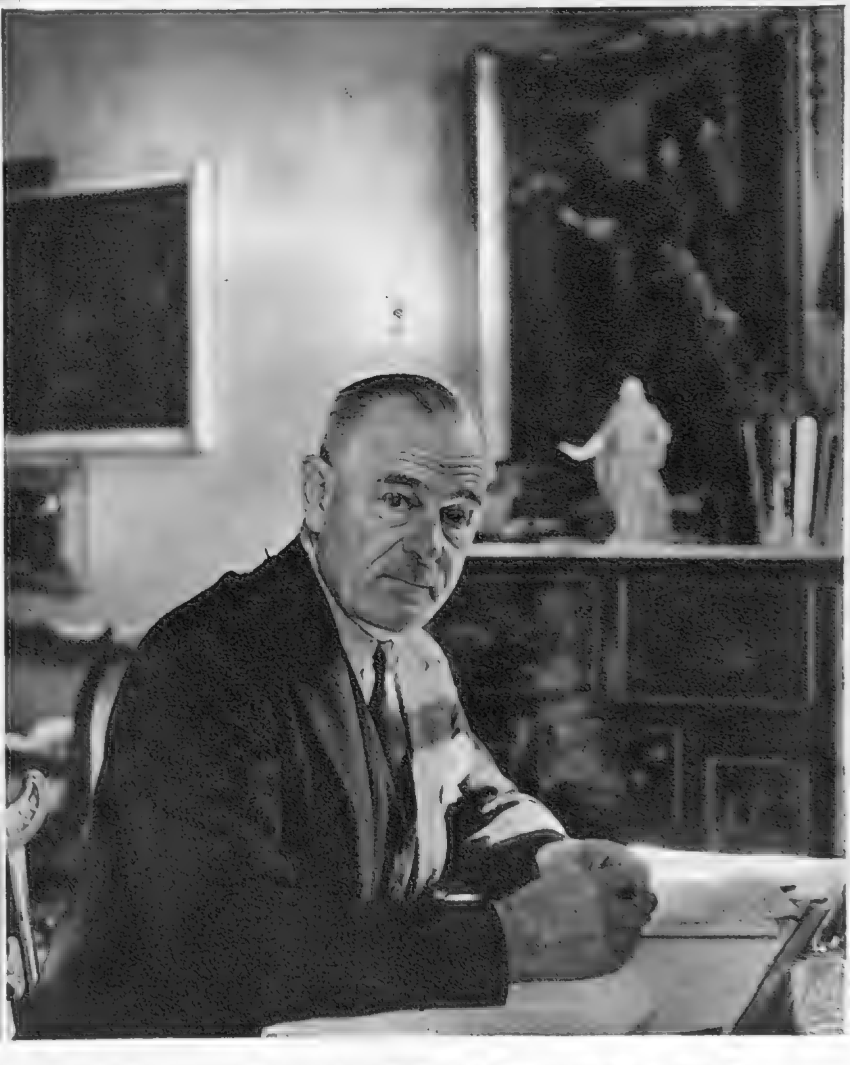
THE QUEEN *has a chat with a Land Girl who drives the mechanized straw baler on the harvest fields at Sandringham.*

PETROL SAVING AT SANDRINGHAM: "BIKE" AND PONY CART FOR THEIR MAJESTIES.

RAISED to the peerage on appointment to the Viceroyalty of India, Field-Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell, G.C.B., C.M.G., M.C., took the title of VISCOUNT WAVELL OF CYRENAICA AND WINCHESTER. "Cyrenaica" because there, as a General, he won his first victories against the Axis by driving the Italians to Tripoli, and "Winchester" because he is an old Wykehamist and comes of a family which had centuries-old connections with the city. Lord Wavell, the first soldier-Viceroy in India's history—an appointment due to the times and the necessity for defence—has given up his uniform, and in the past two years has gained experience of Indian political as well as military problems. In 1915, then Sir Archibald Wavell, he married Eugénie Marie, daughter of Colonel Owen Quirk. Their only son is serving in his father's regiment, the Black Watch; of their daughters, Pamela is married to Lieut. A. F. W. Humphrys, son of Sir Francis Humphrys, former British Ambassador in Baghdad; Joan is married to Captain the Hon. Simon N. Astley, younger son of Lord and Lady Hastings, and Felicity has worked as a secretary at G.H.Q., Egypt.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CECIL BEATON.





"I NOW TAKE OFF MY UNIFORM": THE VICEROY-DESIGNATE OF INDIA.

THREE GENERATIONS OF THE HOUSE OF ORANGE-NASSAU IN CANADA:

H.R.H. PRINCE BERNHARD OF THE NETHERLANDS *gets a good snapshot of* T.R.H. PRINCESS IRENE *(left) and* PRINCESS BEATRIX.

H.R.H. PRINCESS JULIANA OF THE NETHERLANDS *with her youngest daughter,* H.R.H. PRINCESS MARGRIET.

Eldest daughter of Princess Juliana; H.R.H. PRINCESS BEATRIX, *born in 1938.*

THE Netherlands Royal Family recently enjoyed a happy reunion in Canada, where Princess Juliana is living with her children, the occasion being the baptism of her youngest daughter, Princess Margriet Francisca, who was born in Ottawa last January. The little Princess is the first child to be born to any Royal House in Canada, and also the first member of the Netherlands Royal House to be born abroad. The hospital suite which Princess Juliana occupied was declared by the Canadian Government to be Dutch territory within Canada, so the little Princess was born a Dutch citizen. Princess Margriet is the third daughter for Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard, and thus carries on the feminine tradition of the House of Orange-Nassau, which has had only

[*Continued opposite.*

N.B. A Coloured pla

QUEEN WILHELMINA WITH PRINCESS JULIANA AND HER DAUGHTERS.

Heiress to the throne of the Netherlands with her youngest daughter, seven-months-old Princess Margriet.

Second daughter of Princess Juliana: H.R.H. PRINCESS IRENE, *born in 1939.*

The Netherlands Royal Family in Canada: PRINCESS JULIANA, *holding baby Margriet;* H.M. QUEEN WILHELMINA *and* PRINCE BERNHARD *with the* PRINCESSES IRENE *and* BEATRIX.

Continued.]
fifteen male descendants since William I., born in 1553. The country has, for the last fifty years, been ruled by women. Princess Juliana will succeed her mother, and the succession will then pass to Princess Beatrix, unless a male heir is born. Since her arrival in Canada in 1940, Princess Juliana has carried on her war work. Prince Bernhard flew over from Britain on January 11 to be with her. Queen Wilhelmina recently returned from Canada, thus completing her fourth Atlantic air crossing. She celebrates her sixty-third birthday next week, as she was born on August 31, 1880.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARSH OF OTTAWA.

inserted in this issue.

DOROTHY THOMPSON'S WEDDING TO MAXIM KOPF.

After the ceremony: DOROTHY THOMPSON, *the brilliant journalist and radio commentator, and her bridegroom,* MAXIM KOPF.

Wedding reception chat: DOROTHY THOMPSON KOPF *(right) with* MRS. RAYMOND GRAM SWING, *wife of the commentator, and* MISS SWING *(centre).*

After the party, at which many well-known personalities were entertained: DOROTHY THOMPSON KOPF *relaxes in sports clothes.*

Cutting the wedding cake: MAXIM KOPF, *formerly one of Prague's leading artists, guides the hands of his wife,* DOROTHY THOMPSON KOPF.

DOROTHY THOMPSON has just married a Czechoslovakian artist, MAXIM KOPF. The ceremony took place at the village church in Barnard, Vermont, and was followed by an informal reception held at Twin Farms, the bride's country home. Dorothy Thompson, formerly the wife of Sinclair Lewis, the novelist, was foreign correspondent for the Curtis-Martin Newspapers, Inc., from 1920-28, and from 1924-28 held the post of Chief of the Central European Service at Berlin, and her brilliant broadcasts after the outbreak of war will be remembered by everyone. Mr. Kopf, who is fifty-one, served in the Austrian Army in the 1914-18 war, and subsequently became a citizen of Czechoslovakia. In 1938 he joined the Czech Army, and fled to France after Munich. [PHOTOGRAPHS BY PIX INC.]

AS YOU CAN NEVER SEE YOURSELVES!

Have you ever wondered what you look like when plunging expertly into the swimming-bath from the diving spring-board? The camera has here answered this query dramatically with its unconventional portraits of four bathers frolicking in the water at Miami.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

THE AMERICAN "BUNDLES FOR BRITAIN" SOCIETY, *for sending our Service brides "something borrowed" to wear for luck—nine lease-lend wedding-dresses.*

Petty Officer IRIS GREGORY *acts mannequin in one of the gowns.*

SQUADRON LEADER G. C. BARWELL, *for being the only English airman to fly with the 2000 American raiders at the plastering of Ploesti.*

MISS PATRICIA HALL *was first Wren to wear a lease-lend wedding dress, when she married Lieut. Francis Julian, R.A.*

THE generous American "Bundles for Britain" Society which has supplied hundreds of bombed-out families with new outfits, has been inspired by the thought of our clothes-coupon-bound Service brides into sending over nine new wedding dresses, under lease-lend conditions, specially designed for the use of the W.R.N.S. Lady Ward is seen in the top picture inspecting the gowns at a London H.Q. display of the W.R.N.S.——The photograph inset right shows Petty Officer IRIS GREGORY, the original W.R.N.S. poster girl, wearing one of the dresses, and in the inset on the left MISS PATRICIA HALL, first Wren to wear a lease-lend dress at her wedding, leaves the church with her bridegroom, Lieut. Francis Julian, R.A.

LIEUT. BRYAN JOHN GARDNER, Durham Light Infantry, was the twenty-six-year-old Englishman to whom the Mayor of Catania surrendered his town. He is the son of Mr. John Gardner, of Harpenden, and at the outset of learning the catering business he worked for a time in the kitchens of Oddenino's. He was commander of the first battalion that entered Catania after its fall, and the Mayor had his surrender already typed out to hand over.

THE jeep—that wonderful, speedy little high-powered car which has tickled the English to death since the Americans brought it over, was used by CORPORAL W. SISK, of Austin, Texas, to take his bride, MISS PEGGY POPE, of Canonbury, London, and the bridal party to St. Matthew's Church, Essex Road, London, for their wedding.

SQUADRON LEADER GEORGE CHARLES BARWELL, D.F.C., R.A.F., was the only British airman among the 2000 American raiders who took part in the magnificent attack on the Ploesti oilfields in Rumania on August 1. The raid involved a flight of 2500 miles, lasting 15 hours, and his own Liberator had to dive through flames from a blazing oil plant before it could make its bombing run over the target. "I have done many operational flights," he said, "but I have never known such detail as there was before this raid. We even knew the uniform of every town and village policeman." Two hundred thousand tons of oil were destroyed, and fires raged for four days after the United States Liberators attacked the oilfields. Squadron Leader Barwell has been awarded the American D.F.C. and Air Medal. He flies as an air gunner in the top turret position, and his personal record includes eight enemy fighters shot down in ten trips.

LIEUT. BRYAN J. GARDNER, D.L.I., *for being "first in" at the fall of Catania, and having the town officially handed over to him by its Mayor.*

CORPORAL W. SISK *and* MISS PEGGY POPE, *for having a swift start to their married life—a jeep to the church door.*

MRS. MARIAN PATTERSON, Aberdeen's senior fire-guard, was in the National Gallery recently to inspect a painting by Mr. Robert Sivell (right) showing her performing the brave deed which won her the George Medal. Single-handed she rescued a victim after an air raid. The painting shows her coming out of a bombed building one moment before it collapsed.

MRS. MARIAN PATTERSON, G.M., *for inspecting Mr. Robert Sivell's pictorial record of her own brave deed at the National Gallery.*

Members of the Committee who run the Cairo "Music for All" Club: LADY RUSSELL PASHA is the second from left, talking to MRS. E. F. BESLEY.

A cool and quiet haven: The reading and writing room, well stocked with magazines and papers and writing-tables.

Morning coffee is served in the reading and writing room, which is heated in winter and air-conditioned in summer.

CULTURE, COMFORT AND ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE FORCES IN CAIRO.

"MUSIC FOR ALL" is a Cairo Club which caters for the musical and cultural needs of the Forces. The premises are in a central position and occupy what was once a cinema with a number of smaller buildings added. "Music for All" was opened at the end of 1941, and is run by a committee headed by Lady Russell Pasha and Mrs. E. F. Besley, assisted by Group Capt. Mackay, with Sgt. Clifford Harker as Musical Director.

Sunshine or shade as preferred, and easy chairs for all: A view of the garden lounge, one of the most popular parts of the "Music for All" Club.

The Club premises were originally a cinema, so there is a splendid large music room for concerts and other entertainments. A show is in progress.

The Dramatic Group of the Club rehearsing "The Case of the Frightened Lady," produced by Anthony Holland.

"ACTION IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC" WITH MASSEY AND BOGART.

Beating off an air attack on the "Seawitch"; the anti-aircraft gun crew of an American Liberty ship in action against Nazi bombers.

"Abandon ship!" The tanker has been torpedoed and is ablaze, so the men must take to the boats.

Captain Jarvis (RAYMOND MASSEY)*, looking for Chief Mate Joe Rossi* (HUMPHREY BOGART)*, finds him with Pearl* (JULIE BISHOP)*, whom he has married.*

"ACTION IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC," which was due to open at the Warner Theatre, Leicester Square, and the Regal, Marble Arch, on Friday, August 20, is a fine dramatic film of the Battle of the Atlantic, with Captain Steve Jarvis and Chief Mate Joe Rossi, of an American tanker, as the leading characters. The tanker is torpedoed and a handful of the crew, after severe suffering, get back to land, eager to sign on again! They sail once more in the Liberty ship the *Seawitch*, which joins a convoy bound for Murmansk from Halifax. They make port, but only after prodigious adventures.

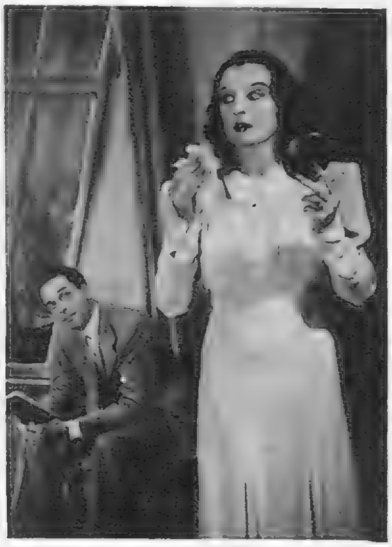
Survivors huddled on a raft after their lifeboat has been rammed; a little band of members of the crew of the torpedoed American tanker.

"Don't tell me what I can do, Mister!" Rossi tries to restrain Captain Jarvis from risking his life to try and save members of the crew of his burning ship.

JACK'S BACK IN "IT'S TIME TO DANCE."

Disguised as pianist and violinist, Lord D'Arcy (FRED EMNEY) *and Willmott Brown* (JACK BUCHANAN) *play madly as they strain an ear to the plot.*

Conchita gives the terrified Willmott Brown a lesson or two in making love.



"In the spring," says Willmott Brown instructively, "a young man's fancy lightly turns . . ." Marian Kane (ELSIE RANDOLPH) *is quite unimpressed. "Does it?" she snaps.*

MARJORIE BROOKS *plays Conchita d'Alvarez, a Latin lady all glamour and emotion, from whose neck Mr. Brown must snatch a necklace.*

TWO PRETTY GUESTS *at the Milan Hotel add a Cuban note to the general décor.*

JACK BUCHANAN dances again in the West End, after six years' absence, in a new Douglas Furber-Arthur Rose show, "It's Time to Dance," at the Winter Garden. The war is ignored in this new musical, which has a properly complicated story. Music, by Kenneth Leslie Smith, Harry Roy, Gaby Rogers and Harry Phillips, is lively. Lyrics are by Roy, Rogers and Phillips and James Dyrenforth; the settings by Clifford Pember and Joseph Carl; the dance arrangements by Buddy Bradley.

Lord D'Arcy, pseudo-musical dilettante, with an admiration for Sir Henry Wood, and Willmott Brown, long-haired, inefficient violinist, burlesque a musical turn.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

It is pleasant to find in a modern novel emotions of what might be called the middle register, emotions unconnected with the maintenance of a stiff upper lip. In novels specifically about the war one hardly looks for them, and, indeed, they might be thought to be out of place. But even before the war they were rather rare in ordinary fiction. Of love we hear plenty; but it is usually the kind of love that doesn't make people like each other very much; even if it doesn't end in the Divorce Court or in murder, it involves them in a number of painful problems. Moreover, love is apt to usurp the stage and push into the background gentler feelings of friendship, fondness and affection which are just as necessary, perhaps more necessary, to civilisation, and perhaps to the continuance of the race as well. The cult of toughness, popular in all classes of society, is a symptom of this. The hero with the tommy-gun, and steely emotions to match, was already a figure of romantic appeal long before his weapon came into its own on the battlefield. To be intoxicated by love, violence or alcohol, or by all three at once, was the ideal, or, at any rate, the practice, of many of Mr. Hemingway's characters, and moderate states of mind were out of fashion.

Gringo or Greaser.

It is unexpected to find them in a novel, the scene of which is laid in Texas and Mexico—countries inhabited, as one ignorantly imagined, by cowboys, miners, revolutionaries and other tough guys. Mr. Lincoln Kirstein's hero is not a sissy or a tenderfoot; far from it, but neither is he tough—by no means as tough as his adored elder brother, Chano, would have liked him to be. Indeed, the story gets some of its motive power from his efforts to prove to Chano that he could make his own way in the world. Of polyglot extraction, he was regarded by the Mexicans as a "gringo" and by Americans as a "greaser."

"I was never asked to Mexican parties, and was sometimes snubbed in the street. I am no snob myself, only I feel I am 100 per cent. really American, actually half-Indian and half-Conquistador, while the U.S. citizens are descendants of thieves forced to leave Europe."

Actually, the fact of being bi-lingual and almost bi-national gives him wider sympathies than this rather arrogant manifesto would suggest. I cannot answer for his Spanish, but his English is excellent, even if he does rather mysteriously describe someone as having, "below his chin," "a soft shadowy youthful moustache."

This amusing picture, "ST. LUKE PAINTING THE VIRGIN" by Chier Dimitriu Thornali, (Greek ikon, seventeenth century), is on view in an intriguing exhibition of drawings and paintings of "Artists at Work" at the Nicholson Gallery. A complete studio scene, with imaginary incidentals, it shows the saintly painter surrounded with clouds of glory, while angel attendants' frowning impatiently as they wait on him with palette and medium, bear great resemblance to himself.

The Human Side.

What endears Jésus Alvarez (to call him by two of his fourteen names) to us is his gift for liking and being liked. "For My Brother" is a picaresque novel—much of the action consists of Jésus's adventures in search of Chano—and scores of characters, nearly all Mexican, pass through it. They are graphically described, and few of them are wholly admirable; but most of them are human and lovable—or they seem so, seen through the eyes of this nineteen-year-old observer. Nowhere is this tenderness of outlook more marked than in his picture of his own family; it extends even to Chano, who bullied and taunted him. It is as though the brightness of the sunshine, the scent of the flowers, the splashing of the waterfalls, the happy murmur of a simple and hospitable people bent on enjoying themselves, had somehow got into his nature, and infused everything he sees with the warm glow of a landscape by Giorgione. And when Chano lies dying and the landscape darkens, the effect of pathos is indescribable.

The story proceeds in a haphazard manner—sometimes one is not quite sure if it is going forwards or backwards—but it is continuously interesting. There is one flaw, I think; the writer is a much more sophisticated person than was the narrator at the age in which he appears in the story; and there are alternations of sophistication and ingenuousness in the latter's character which can scarcely be reconciled.

Devils in Prague.

"Hostages" brings us back to Europe, to Nazi-occupied Prague, and we bid farewell to all the gentler aspects of human nature. As far as the Germans are concerned it might be said that we bid farewell to human nature itself, for with the solitary exception of Lieutenant Glasenapp, the unhappy officer whose suicide is the occasion of the tragedy, none of them bears the smallest resemblance to an ordinary human being; they are all thorough-paced fiends.

The idea of the story is one with which the war has made us only too familiar: the shooting of hostages for an act of violence against the Nazi oppressor. This was the theme of "The Dead Look On." But in "Hostages" there was no act of violence: the dead men had committed suicide, as Police Commissioner Reinhardt well knew. The case was a frame-up, a mere excuse to terrorise the Czechs by the summary execution of twenty innocent men. His one fear was lest the fact of suicide should leak out, and there seemed little danger of that, for no one had seen Glasenapp step into the water, and the Nazi police were aware of the contents of the letter found in his pocket which pointed to suicide.

Thus to the brutality and injustice of making the innocent suffer for the guilty is added an appalling cynicism. If I were asked to name the six most painful books I have ever read, I should certainly put "Hostages" among them. For not only is its general atmosphere so poisonous to one's moral sense as to be almost unbreathable, but the tortures it describes do not bear thinking about. Reinhardt is a monster capable of every kind of cruelty, from the obvious and physical to the refined and mental. He practises them all on all his victims, adapting them to suit each case, and for the girl Milada, who attracts his sensual eye, he makes the phrase "a fate worse than death" something more than a cliché.

Psychological Studies.

I think Mr. Stefan Heym tends to overdo all this, though he does it very well, and the story would be more tragic if it were less horrible. On the other hand, he is not solely concerned to make our flesh creep and to work us up into a fury of vindictiveness against the Germans. Like Dr. Wallerstein, himself one of the hostages, he is genuinely interested in the way the five victims react to torture and to the imminence of death. The doctor, the actor, the actor's wife's lover, the quisling capitalist, and Janoshik, the lavatory man at the café where the murder was supposed to have taken place, all behave very differently: the actor, anxious to make his final exit impressive, confesses to the murder; the capitalist, hoping to the last for reprieve, accuses Janoshik of having done it. One by one their pretences are torn from them and they are reduced in every sense to their lowest terms; they quarrel with and abuse each other, approaching death makes them less companionable instead of more. Only the simple Janoshik, for whom the severest torments are reserved, keeps his dignity and his head. I thought his whispered observation when brought back from torture—"I never felt better in my life"—too dramatically effective; it is a fault of Mr. Heym's art that he does not know when to stop. Still, the character of Janoshik, and the philosophic background of the story, save it from being a Chamber of Horrors. Humour, courage and cheerfulness are among the attributes of a free man which tyranny cannot stamp out: Janoshik dies, but his spirit lives on, and with it the hope of his countrymen.

As Clever as they Make 'Em.

Cleverness is an essential element of a detective-story, and it is an element in which American detective-stories are particularly rich. Mr. Rex Stout is as clever as they are made. His dialogue snaps and sparkles with wise-cracks to such an extent that its glitter sometimes obscures its meaning—a useful trait when Mr. Stout does not want to make his meaning clear. "Johnny, who is a gentleman from his skin out"—this sort of thing goes on all the time, and there is hardly a character, even Inspector Cramer of the Homicide Squad, who cannot produce it. There are two stories in "Black Orchids": one in which murder takes place at a flower-show, another in which Bess Huddleston, "the most successful party-arranger for the upper brackets that New York ever had," dies mysteriously of tetanus. "Cut the glitter," she says at one point, but I do not feel disposed to echo her advice, for Mr. Stout's witticisms are not only smart, but funny. Nero Wolfe, absorbed in orchids and cooking, is a real human being, and Archie Goodwin, if not very real, never allows us a dull moment.

A Migratory Hero.

Mr. Millward Kennedy's new detective-story, "It Began in New York," moves far too quickly for the reader's attention to wander—indeed, he is more likely to suffer from breathlessness. Peril and excitement, rather than melancholy, have marked the hero for their own. But even had his nature been reflective and introspective, it would have had no chance to indulge its bent. Flying from continent to continent, chased by spies of various nationalities, Mr. Cousins displays to the full the stuff of which heroes are made. The atmosphere is clear-cut and matter-of-fact, our flesh is not asked to creep, but there is suspense and variety enough to make the time pass very pleasantly.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

For My Brother. By Lincoln Kirstein. (*Hogarth Press*; 8s. 6d.)
Hostages. By Stefan Heym. (*Putnam*; 8s. 6d.)
Black Orchids. By Rex Stout. (*Collins*; 7s. 6d.)
It Began in New York. By Millward Kennedy. (*Gollancz*; 8s. 6d.)

The malignant young Nazi (" SKIPPY *"* HOMEIER*) greets Frame* (RALPH BELLAMY)*, Patricia* (JOYCE VAN PATTEN) *and Frame's fiancée* (SHIRLEY BOOTH).

Emil has been so inoculated with the Nazi virus that he slashes the portrait of his own father, who died in a concentration camp for anti-Hitler views.

" Heil Hitler ! " The Nazi child salutes the maid in the Frame household. He is furious to hear that, though of German birth, she is anti-Nazi.

Snooping and spying are part of the Nazi education, so Emil tries all Frame's keys to get into his desk and examine his papers. He is surprised by Patricia.

Emil has been schooled to spy on his parents, so he is only following out the precepts instilled into him by surreptitiously looking at Frame's papers.

Patricia, horrified at Emil's snooping round her father's desk, threatens to tell on him. Emil tries to frighten her, and seizes a heavy book-end.

CAN THE NAZI VIRUS BE ERADICATED? "TO-MORROW THE WORLD."

Right : Emil, the young Hitler hooligan, has knocked out Patricia with a book-end. Frame finds her, and suspects Emil to be the author of the outrage.

"TO-MORROW THE WORLD," produced on Broadway, is an arresting drama of the malignance of the Nazi virus implanted in a little boy as the result of schooling in modern Germany. Emil is introduced into an American household, and his host Michael Frame, endeavours to transform the Hitler hooligan into a decent citizen. He has small success, for Emil betrays all the "*Herrenvolk's*" brutality, cruelty and obstinacy. Twelve-year-old "Skippy" Homeier gives a really terrifying performance as the little monster from Mittel Europa. He has just been chosen best juvenile performer on Broadway by the Drama League.

WINGS FOR VICTORY.*

By PATRICK SAXON.

"I WISH," said Flight Lieut. Bates of "'P' for Pudding," "that you would persuade your cat not to use my bed as a lying-in hospital. I don't like cats in general, and I actively dislike Susan in particular."

Susan, the rather astonished mother of six, mewed plaintively, and turning her back on Bates, rubbed her long whiskers affectionately on the left boot of Flight Lieut. Goodheart, Intelligence Officer of a remake R.A.F. station in Ballyhooch.

"Tut-tut," said Goodheart. "My mother taught me to be kind to animals."

"With your goat and your pigeons and your cat, this place is like an insanitary menagerie," grumbled Bates. "What's the use of them?"

"The goat gives milk, the cat catches mice and everyone knows what the pigeons are for," replied Goodheart patiently.

"M-m-m," said Bates thoughtfully. "Maybe you've got something there."

To say that there was a feud between Bates and Goodheart would be an overstatement: it was a question of scoring off each other more than anything else. And, of course, there was Betty.

Betty was a twenty-two-year-old W.A.A.F. officer, and her mirror had never reflected anything but a beautiful image, even after the most wizard party and the shortest night. As for her figure, a rag became a creation as soon as she slipped it over her shining head.

The betting on the station was slightly in favour of Bates, but odds of anything more than six to four against Goodheart were quickly snapped up by the thoughtful gambler. Bates was the little glamour boy, but it was felt that Goodheart was solid and was never caught napping. It was Bates who started something—but Goodheart who finished it. It was Bates who had arranged to-morrow's luncheon-party in honour of Betty's second ring, and even when he found that he was duty officer he told her not to worry.

"I'll be there," said he confidently.

"You've slipped once or twice before, you know," Betty warned him. "Now, with Goody——"

Bates opened his mouth, but Betty put her well-manicured hand over it and said: "Naughty! And besides, I like him. He's so kind."

The new day came in with icy winds and frozen rain which rattled the curtains of Goodheart's window like a nagging woman. He stirred in his sleep and suddenly sat up.

There was a queer sort of fluttering noise in his room, which was followed by a metallic pattering on his oilcloth. He leaped from his bed, switched on the light, cursed the black-out and closed the window in a matter of seconds.

Perched on the rail of his bed and scratching its left ear with a thoughtful claw was a pigeon.

"Well, well!" said Goodheart, with a certain amount of relief. "I wonder where you came from? You're not one of mine."

The pigeon blinked with disapproval at Goodheart's pyjamas as the Intelligence Officer threw the bird a couple of "Tweets" and looked up a file. When, a few moments later, he turned and shot a glance at the bird's legs, the pigeon, noticing with dismay a look usually seen only on the faces of small boys and amorous male pigeons, retreated with every indication of panic.

Goodheart followed, making queer but hitherto successful noises with his tongue and lips. In this case, they increased rather than allayed the bird's obvious anxiety, and although past its prime, it cleverly sought refuge on a framed picture of the Chief of Bomber Command.

Then began one of those blood-hunts which haunt the dreams of the R.S.P.C.A., and over which it is better to draw a veil. Shins were scarred, feathers flew and Sir Arthur Harris never looked the same again. The bird was caught, and the Station Intelligence Officer, panting and peering, examined it with considerable interest.

On its right leg was a scrap of paper, which he soon saw bore a message. There was a strange glint in his eyes as he read it. He frowned thoughtfully. It was quite a busy hour before he donned a heavy coat and reported to his Commanding Officer.

Betty's party was over when Flight Lieut. Bates returned. Betty had been bitter, but not half as bitter as Bates when he reported to the C.O.

"Didn't see a damn thing, Sir, in the whole of the flight!"

"How was the weather?"

"Pretty duff, Sir, but good enough to see if there had been anything."

"H-m-m. I suppose Goodheart had the position right," mused the C.O.

"Who, Sir?" asked Bates.

"Goodheart. He had the message."

"May I see it, please?" asked Bates, with instant suspicion.

"Yes. I'll get him to bring it in."

Goodheart entered gaily. The lunch had been successful in every way.

"Ah, Goodheart," said the C.O. "Have you the message you got last night?"

"Certainly, Sir. Here it is."

"But this isn't the original."

"No, Sir. Fortunately, I had a copy made. I'm sorry to say, Sir, that Billy, the goat——"

A light of horror, dismay and understanding dawned in the eyes of Bates.

"What does it say?" he asked thickly.

"It's in German, and says 'U-349 proceed to position 56° 37′ 30″ N. 21° 05′ 30″ W. to join party.'"

"Is that the position you went to?" asked the C.O.

"Yes, Sir. The navigator can prove that."

"Ah, well," said Goodheart. "That's the way it goes."

"How did he get this message?" demanded Bates.

"Didn't I tell you this morning?" asked the C.O. "A pigeon brought it."

"Wha-a-at?" A great light now shone in Bates's eyes.

"That's right. Amazing, isn't it, after what I said yesterday about animals and things," remarked Goodheart blandly.

"Look here, Sir!" Bates protested. "This stinks!"

"What, Bates?"

"Stinks, Sir. The facts are that I borrowed a pigeon last night from Paddy Lee in the village, wrote a message and stuck the pigeon through Goodheart's window early this morning."

"Why did you do that?" the C.O. asked perplexedly.

"It was a joke, Sir, telling Goodheart to report to Air Ministry Intelligence to-day as a check on communications."

Goodheart laughed good-naturedly. "A bit feeble if that were true. I could have checked on the 'phone."

"But don't you see, Sir?" said Bates desperately. "Goodheart's tried to turn the tables. He says the goat has eaten the only evidence we might have checked. He must be lying."

"Goodheart!" said the C.O. "Is this true? It's a very serious thing, you know."

"I hope you don't think I'd do a thing like that, Sir," replied Goodheart reproachfully.

"There's a very simple way of proving it," said Bates in a menacing tone. "All we have to do is to get Paddy Lee to identify the bird."

It seemed both to the C.O. and Bates that Goodheart paled as they turned to him.

"We'll *all* go along to your room now and get the bird," said the C.O. coldly.

"I do hope it hasn't flown away," sneered Bates as they entered Goodheart's room.

"Where is it?"

"In that basket."

It was Bates himself who opened the basket.

From a cloud of feathers Susan, the cat, jumped nimbly out. . . .

Bates swore that she winked at Goodheart as she slid happily out through the doorway.

THE END.

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

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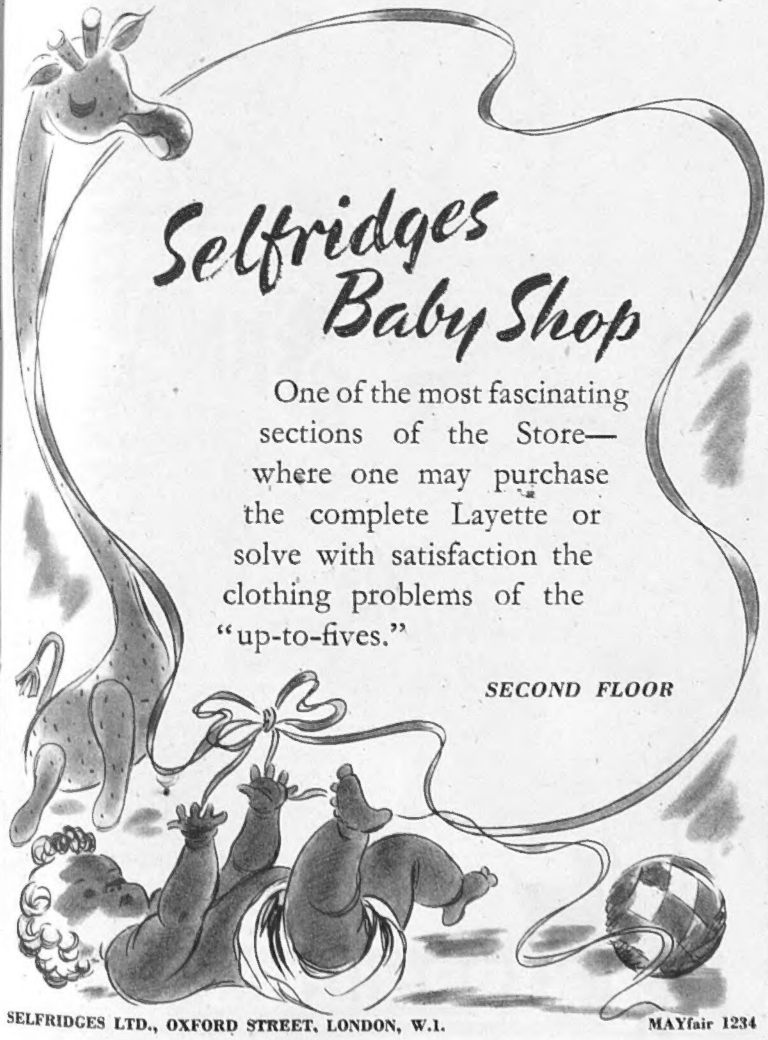

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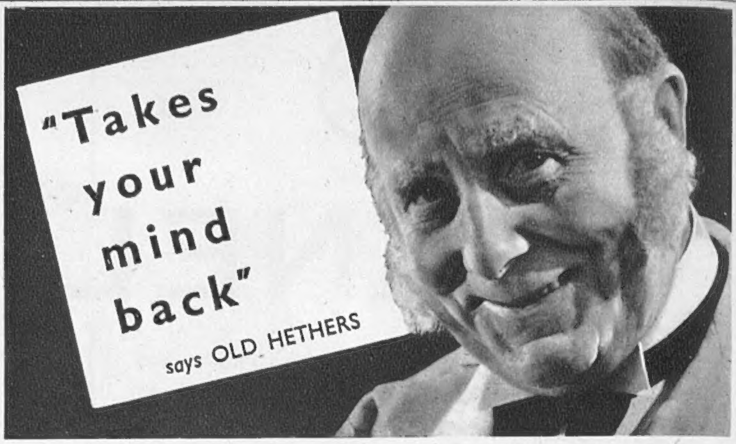

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